

Title: Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program

Purpose:

Provide peer-to-peer breastfeeding counseling to promote and support initiation and duration of breastfeeding among WIC participants.

Authority:

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 provided funds for State agencies to implement or expand peer counseling programs according to the FNS model.

Policy:

The Montana WIC Program will select site(s) for local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs which will receive identified Breastfeeding Peer Counselor funding. Other local WIC programs may fund Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs from their regular WIC administrative funds or other grant funds. All local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs regardless of the funding source will comply with the Montana Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Plan, policies and the FNS model.

I. Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs

- A. Initial applicants for the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program funding will submit a plan outlining their proposal including:
 - 1. Identifying Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Supervisor.
 - 2. Recruitment and training of Breastfeeding Peer Counselor.
 - 3. Contact methods and timing.
 - 4. Referrals to the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor.
 - 5. Documentation by the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor.
 - 6. Outreach with community resources.
- B. Will submit a brief descriptive proposal each fiscal year.
- C. Will submit required reports.
- D. Will submit monthly expenditure reports for reimbursement.
- E. Will submit an annual report of program operations and activities for the period of April 1 to March 31 (or part of year during initial year) due by April 30th
- F. Will report on the two (2) selected measurable objectives for the contract period due by November 30th.
- G. A separate contract or task order will be required.

- H. Will be responsible for recruiting, hiring and training Breastfeeding Peer Counselors.
- I. Will retain records per master contract or WIC task order requirements.
- J. Periodic visits by the State Breastfeeding Coordinator will be made to project sites.
- K. Policies developed at the Local Agency will be approved by the State Agency prior to implementation.

II. Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Staffing

A. State Breastfeeding Coordinator responsibilities:

- 1. Oversight for the operation of all of the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs
- 2. Coordinate state level activities including program selection, contracts, funding, monitoring and evaluation.

B. Local Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Supervisors

- 1. May be a WIC staff member or a contractor.
- 2. Has at least 1 year of experience in counseling women about how to breastfeed successfully.
- 3. Preferably holds additional certification in lactation management, such as the IBCLC, CLC, or other certification in lactation management which may be obtained under the initial grant.
- 4. Coordinate breastfeeding promotion and support activities; and
- 5. Participate in State-approved training in lactation management.

C. Breastfeeding Peer Counselor:

- 1. Recruited from the target population
- 2. Available to consult with participants outside clinic hours and outside the clinic environment.
- 3. Ideally, able to meet the following criteria:
 - a. Enthusiastic for breastfeeding.
 - b. Has basic communication skills.
 - c. Has previous breastfeeding experience
 - d. Has similarities with participants served.
 - e. Is a current or previous participant.

- f. Is similar in ethnic background, age and language spoken.
- 4. Will have regular and systematic contacts with the Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor to conduct a review of contact logs and activities.
- 5. Will have monthly meetings between the Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor to review problems, issues, and monitor status of the program.
- 6. Will have access to Montana WIC computer system.
- 7. Will receive referrals from other staff.
- 8. Will make appropriate referrals for unsolved breastfeeding problems.
- 9. May make telephone contacts from home and/or the clinic.
- 10. May conduct home and hospital visits (will be specified in the job description).
- 11. May conduct breastfeeding classes.
- 12. Makes the following recommended contacts:
 - a. Every 2-3 days in the first critical 7-10 days postpartum; daily if the woman reports problems with breastfeeding.
 - b. Within 24 hours if woman reports problems with breastfeeding.
 - c. Weekly throughout the rest of the first month of the infant's life.
- 13. All activities with participants will be documented in the participant's folder either directly or scanned within 5 business day.

III. Training for Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program

- A. State Breastfeeding Coordinator will work with the Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor during the initial contract to address training needs and materials available.
 - 1. "Loving Support through Peer Counseling" training curriculum will be used.
- B. Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor will train peer counselors utilizing the "Loving Support through Peer Counseling".
- C. Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor and Peer Counselors will be required to maintain continuing education credits.
 - 1. Encouraged to obtain their continuing education credits through coursework pertinent to breastfeeding promotion and support.
- D. Clinic staff will be trained in basic breastfeeding support and receive the training "Loving Support through Peer Counseling."

- E. Other opportunities such as observational learning, independent study or conferences/workshops may be offered.
- F. Peer Counselors will receive ongoing training at regularly scheduled meetings.

IV. Establishment of Community Partnerships

G. Examples of possible community partners are:

1. Breastfeeding coalitions
2. Businesses
3. Community organizations
4. Cooperative extension program
5. International board certified lactation consultants (IBCLCs)
6. La Leche League
7. Home visiting programs
8. Private clinics
9. Hospitals